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EDITORIAL.

THE seventh session of the International Congress of Geologists was, and undoubtedly will always remain, the most remarkable in the history of this organization. In conception and in execution its plans far exceeded those of any session that preceded it, and were much greater than may be expected for any that may follow. Governmental, industrial and social forces conspired to secure the success of the programme prepared by the Russian geologists. A most powerful government not only lent its hearty sympathy but furnished material assistance and coöperation. The Emperor and Empress received a delegation from all the countries represented at the congress, and all members in attendance were given a luncheon in the summer palace. The Grand Duke Constantine Constantinovitch and the Princess d'Oldenbourg and the Minister of Agriculture and Domains opened the session and welcomed the members to St. Petersburg. The Grand Duke Constantine and the Grand Duchess Elisabeth Mavrikiевна entertained a large number of the geologists at their palace. The mayor of St. Petersburg invited all the members to a reception in the city hall. These tokens of good will and approval could not have been stronger; their genuineness was proved by the material benefits enjoyed by all who took part in the congress and the excursions. First-class passes were furnished over all the railroads of European Russia and Finland, good for three months, and entitling one to the use of sleeping cars. Many official courtesies were also extended which often amounted to complete freedom from customs and police surveillance, and greatly simplified traveling through various governmental provinces into remote parts of the empire. Industrial enterprises, in any way indebted to geological science, exhibited

the same energy in advancing the interests of the visiting geologists that characterizes their development of the natural resources of the country making it possible to inspect mines and study artificial exposures of great interest. The magnitude of their hospitality also will long be remembered. It was prompted by a generosity that seemed common to all classes of people throughout the empire, as was shown upon one occasion by the presentation of bread and salt by the miners of Coloubovka in token of the humble hospitality they would be glad to show us in their houses if we could have visited them. The same hearty welcome was met with in the cities and on the farms of Finland, among the miners in the Urals, and in the town, or camp, or monastery in Transcaucasia — everywhere the same generous spirit and the same expressions of good will.

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THE brilliant success of the seventh session reflects great credit on Russian geologists. To them are due both the conception and execution of the programme. The labor required for the preparation of maps and guides and for the arrangement for the meeting and the excursions can hardly be realized by anyone who has not been engaged in similar undertakings. The general secretary, Professor Tschernyschew, devoted two years to the preliminary work, and others, no doubt, had a very considerable share in it. The management of the excursions was admirable, when it is remembered what difficulties of transportation and limitations of accommodation had to be overcome and when the number of participants is taken into account. The gratitude of all the excursionists is due to the leaders of the several expeditions for the manner in which everything within their control was conducted. Their labors and good intentions were fully appreciated, except by those unfortunates whose first impulse on all such occasions is to criticise and complain, and whose subsequent effort is to find excuse for having done so. When it is remembered that in addition to their responsibility for the details of the excursion, the leaders have also to expound the geology and undergo a cross fire of questions and scientific

criticism, and not infrequently to have judgment hurriedly passed against them on insufficient evidence, the degree of indebtedness to those who undertake such responsibilities is even greater than at first appears.

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THE actual meetings of the congress were reduced to a minimum. Of the eight days set apart for the session in St. Petersburg, four only were occupied by the reading of papers and by discussion; two were given to the opening and closing ceremonies, and two were taken for excursions. The wisdom of this allotment is open to criticism. But it was evident at the time that the most interesting feature of the session for the general member was the social intercourse between members, proving that the individuality of those present was of more immediate interest than the papers read. The audience room unfortunately was not well adapted to the purpose, owing to its large size and the interruptions by members passing through it. It was apparent to many that there would be a distinct gain if in future sessions there should be meetings by sections for those interested in specialized branches of geology, in connection with general meetings, in which all might be interested. It would permit the specialist to present more technical papers, and would allow of more time for their discussion without encroaching upon the time of others. Topics so diverse as palæontology and petrology could be treated at the same time without conflict, and with mutual advantage. The consciousness that a paper would be too technical for a general audience, and that it should be made as short as possible often deters one from devoting the necessary time to its preparation. But with the possibilities of an audience such as might be commanded at an international congress, and with time enough at one's disposal, there could be no stronger incentive for the presentation of one's best possible production. It is to be hoped that the French geologists will inaugurate this practice at the session in Paris in 1900.

The nature of the scientific proceedings of the session will be noted in another issue of the JOURNAL. J. P. I.

It is pleasant to announce that our colleague of the JOURNAL staff, Dr. Hans Reusch, has been engaged to give two courses of lectures at Harvard University during the current year. In the first half of the year he will treat of vulcanism, volcanoes, eruptive rocks, earthquakes and other movements of the Earth's crust. In the second half he will describe the geology of northern Europe and its relations to general geology. He will give a weekly seminar to advanced students and will take part in their field and laboratory work, his special subjects being the geology of the seashore and the geology of special districts in Europe. These lectures are given on the Sturgess-Hooper foundation recently occupied by Professor J. D. Whitney, but vacant since his death.

C.